

Tulia Independent School District

702 NW 8th Street

Tulia, TX 79088

January 28, 2005

Letter of Appeal
Schools and Libraries Division
Box 125 – Correspondence Unit
80 South Jefferson Road
Whippany, NJ 07981

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is an **appeal/Request for Review** of a funding decision.

My contact information is:

Angie Cox
Tulia Independent School District
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Tulia, TX, 79088
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Billed Entity Name: Tulia Independent School District

Billed Entity Number: 141876

Document Title: Funding Commitment Decision Letter (Funding Year 2003: 07/01/2003 – 06/30/2004)

Document Date: May 12, 2003.

Applicant Name: Tulia Indep School District

Form 471 Application Number: 356632

FRN: 961809

CC Docket No. 02-6

I am appealing the decision to deny funding for **FRN 961809** for Service Provider Valor Telecommunications of Texas. The original request was for \$18,600 for local telephone service. **The explanation for denial was ineligible services or products—30% or more of this FRN includes a request for unsubstantiated charges, which are ineligible per program rules.**

I worked with Valor Telecom (our only option for local phone service) for sixth months prior to the 471 application deadline in an attempt to get our billing accurate so that our Erate funding request would be accurate and fair to both the school district and the taxpayers. As the deadline arrived, it appeared that only half of our billing information had been corrected. I felt my options were limited. I could have requested too little funding, thus shortchanging our district, or I could have requested what appeared to be the necessary amount based on previous years' bills, and hope that Valor would come through with the correct information. It would have been very easy for me to provide the inaccurate Valor bills from the previous year that would have validated my request to within 30% of the \$18,600, but I felt it was important to provide a totally accurate request.

I worked with the Valor Complex Orders representative to get the initial billing correction. This process began in July 2002 with a number of phone calls to Valor's Erate specialist who assured me the

corrections would be made through customer service. After no changes to our billing and additional phone calls to the Valor Erate specialist, I was finally connected with the Complex Accounts Division. That process took another two months, which did not end until late February 2003, long after the Erate 471 filing deadline. Ironically, we have since learned that the corrected billings and reduced amount were still inaccurate, and that the original request of \$18,600 was very close to the accurate necessary amount.

I had not read nor heard about the 30% rule until receiving the denial of funding notice. I have since located that information on the Schools and Libraries website. However, I was unable to find that information on the 471 application instructions, which is the instrument I studied to stay in compliance while completing the application.

In light of the recent decision by the FCC overturning the "30% unsubstantiated policy", please reconsider our funding request for local phone service. Our mistake was in trying to be honest and fair, and I trust that the SLD would look favorably on Tulia Independent School District for making an extra effort to ensure the accuracy of our billing and funding request. Thank you for your patience and reconsideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angie Cox". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angie Cox
Technology Facilitator
Tulia Independent School District